



Management of Functional Public Universities for Leadership Values Re-orientation and National Development in Rivers State

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Abstract

This paper examined management of functional public universities for leadership, values re-orientation and national development in Rivers State. Two (2) research questions and two (2) hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 1 federal and 2 state universities in Rivers State, with a teaching staff population of 3300 from where a sample of 1,000 teaching staff which were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. A validated 20-item instrument tagged Management of Functional Public Universities for Leadership Values Re-orientation Questionnaire (MFPULVRQ) with a reliability index of 0.92 was designed by the researcher. Mean scores and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while the z-test was used in testing hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study show that management, functional public universities and leadership are critical to effective values re-orientation for national development. It was recommended that university leadership should be at the forefront to transmit codified knowledge (explicit-instructional and the implicit-behavioural) for sustainable values re-orientation to take place.

Keywords: Management, functional public universities, leadership, values re-orientation and national development.

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INTRODUCTION

We live in interesting times, lots of changes, innovations, climate change, reforms initiatives all around us—globalization, information and communication superhighway, social media among others. The use of these modern facilities have influenced many youths negatively and distorted their mindset about life. The mentality syndrome of get-rich-quick spreading among the politicians, celebrities and or religious leaders have enormous impacts on them too.

The traditional values that were cherished by our fore-fathers are today partially abhorred by the youths. Such virtues as: honesty, learning our local language, security, sanctity of lives, integrity, hard work, transparency, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, respect for elders, diligence, patriotism and so on, should be inculcated into every youths as responsible citizens. After all, responsible citizenship is the hallmark of every promising society. Our values are our national pride.

The educational administrator should advocate total education of the client (cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills). FME (2006) in Kaegon (2008) in her publication indicate that the day-to-day running of the school should not be the prerogative of the school head or teachers alone. The students should be involved to ensure effective compliance of school rules, basic values and for the development of latent leadership's qualities in them. To this end, secondary schools, universities are encouraged to operate a prefectorial system, students' unions for active involvement of the students in school administration. Youths in today's schools need value added education with "visible options". A system that is stable and has the "appropriate reinforcements". If we want students to be more responsible, we must teach them to be more responsible.

The universities are built for knowledge acquisition as well as bringing about change in character and learning for individuals who attend schools. Therefore, Dienye and Iwele (2011) contend that a better way of disseminating the knowledge of such desired values is by creating awareness through the enlightenment and interpretation of what the values stand for. The university is the gateway for the orientation of values that foster national unity, obedience to lay down rules, tolerance and development.

In fact, the present writer sees it as an investment and a social service organization geared towards the truth. Ebong (2000) added that universities must be institutions in the service of society. They serve society by providing intellectual leadership, and setting standards of morals and values, human resources development, by contribution to the advancement of the whole national society and by promoting international cooperation and understanding between people. The university must serve as a depository of the national values and culture, be able to promote the links between the national identity, culture, languages and history, and socio-economic development. One can rightly describe the university as the heart of society.

Obanya (2014) argues that the greatest need in educational management is the development of management and leadership skills in educational administrators and teachers who have to manage the system at various levels. The educational system especially the universities would require transformed administrators and teachers, applying transformational pedagogy to achieve societal values. The scholar insists that universities should enhance the social relevance of their knowledge generation, knowledge transmission and knowledge sharing functions by making the needs/values of society the centre piece of it all. The future lies with full, systematic involvement (as institutions) in the conceptualization of national development initiatives.

Studies by Greenwood and Gaunt (1994) in Kaegon (2008) found that there is no substitute for leadership. What is required in universities is a principle-centred/decisive leadership which will bring about the achievement of basic values that will shape all

racism/people. Research findings showed that quality education could be achieved by effective management of schools through committed educational administrators who walk the talk. This is to ensure that the change effort is managed by capable hands. No wonder Obanya (2014) reiterates that:

a visionary leader has the ability for systems thinking, taking the entire system (and not bits and pieces of it) in his or her focus. Such a leader is also capable of acting strategically, identifying and acting on issues that are most likely to impact most positively on the entire system. Visionary leaders are also usually horizontally skilled (with a cross-disciplinary outlook) in addition to being specialists in their own rights, and so also vertically skilled. He or she is also equipped with advanced visioning skills – the ability to see beyond the immediate, to perceive early social/civic warning systems, to anticipate, acting proactively, and to plan and project in a long term perspective (p. 551).

University leadership is the first step in driving a university towards the world-class status path. Therefore, the focus now is to look afresh at what the personnels in education do and how they do it, whether in the classroom or in school management. The observation of Ebong (2000) is important here:

the universities must provide a wide variety of programmes to suit the needs and aptitudes of the students with due regard to needs, human resource development; provide programmes that cultivate knowledge, reflection, creativity, scientific temper and good judgment; cultivate in the students human values, the spirit of national integration and social justice; and undertake research on problems associated with social, economic and cultural development of the society (p. 104).

In other words, the university must involve itself with the inculcation of the value system in keeping with the ideals of secularism, democracy, national integration and social justice as well as with studies, work and services related to national development.

On the challenges of managing functional universities' education for leadership and values re-orientation for national development, Obasanjo (2000) states clearly that The Committee of Pro-Chancellors, The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Lecturers have to pilot the affairs of the universities to successfully face the challenges of the twenty-first century. These challenges are: access, values orientation, quality, relevance, financing and globalization among others. All concerned must provide strategies and at the same time, improve quality and reform curricular and pedagogy to ensure relevance to the needs of the knowledge economy and the world of work.

To Adegoke (2017), quick-money-making syndrome sweeping across to teenagers who without proper counselling and re-orientation would believe in such a defective mentality. Social vices like the use of illicit drugs, internet fraud and reckless and wasteful spending are being promoted through songs and status updates by celebrities today. The scholar, however, advised that youths should focus on living a virtuous life and making good use of the internet and social media for their personal development and development in Nigeria.

Also, Ugwuegbu (2011) explains that in Nigeria, values orientation is aimed at resolving the crises of politics, disunity, religious bigotry, tribalism, corruption practices and indiscipline. This trend is also geared toward the transformation of leadership and citizens to instill patriotism, encourage hard work, and build better society. Similarly, reports emanating from FME–ORASS (2006) reveal that school vices such as exam malpractices, drug addiction, cultism, flagging/bullying among others have predominantly negative impacts on the students as well as the school. This is why Dienye and Iwele (2011) insist that educational administrators and teachers should be given leadership education and be retrained in values education to enable them have relative command and authority of the right values needed to handle the youths for national integration and development.

In line with this, Obanya (2014) states that for education, this poses very serious challenges. Education is expected in all cultures to inculcate values. There is a deep-seated value crisis in a society, largely due to the absence of leadership by example at all levels of education. It is manifested in the value that society now places on instant wealth and lack of social recognition for sustained effort, hard work, industriousness, and most regrettably, an absolute disregard for merit. The scholar however, argues that since values are more often “caught” (imbibed through normal socialization processes) than “taught” (acquired through systematic instruction in the course of formal education), the encouragement of negative values in wider society tends to wipe off the efforts of the school. The present writer acknowledges that these challenges can be surmounted if the administrators, effective teachers promote basic virtues, reward hard work, performance and continue to inculcate and propagate universally cherished values, reforms and realities that universities are known for.

Statement of Problem

Universities are leading in continuous search for excellence particularly in all areas of human activity on international best practices. In this assignment are educational administrators who should take initiatives, have strong organizational, leadership, team-oriented skills and well networked to inculcate accepted ethical and social standards/values. However, current practices that focus on the erosion of traditional values, indiscipline, corruption, greed, abuse of electoral processes, impunity by the so called leaders, terrorism, kidnapping, economic crimes, illegal bunkering and theft of oil, collapse of education, political assassinations among others are disturbing news and should force all at our individual levels to ask the right questions. Nigerian educational system especially universities could take dramatic turn if the educational administrators are ready to improve their performance by bringing the most up-to-date methods and knowledge to bear on its training for values-orientation for staff and students respectively.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined management of functional public universities for leadership, values-orientation and national development in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- Identify the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.
- Identify challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Research Questions

- What are the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development?
- What are the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development?

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference between federal and state universities teaching staff on the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.
- There is no significant difference between federal and state universities teaching staff on the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

METHODOLOGY

The design for the study was the descriptive survey which sought to examine management of functional public universities for leadership, values-reorientation and national development in Rivers State. The population of the study were -1 Federal (University of Port Harcourt), and two State Universities (Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education) in Nigeria, with a teaching staff strength of 3,300 who were the respondents of the study, from where a sample of 1,000 was selected using the stratified random sampling technique. Respondents of the study responded to a validated 20-item instrument tagged: Management of Functional Public Universities for Leadership Values Re-orientation Questionnaire (MFPULVRQ) with a reliability index of .92, obtained using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formular (r), designed in the modified Likert scale model. Mean and standard deviation was used in answering the research questions while z-test statistics were used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument was properly validated by experts in the departments of educational management and measurement and evaluation. A criterion mean of 2.50 was established.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Ratings of Teaching Staff from Federal and State Universities on the Roles of Educational Administrators in Managing Functional Public Universities for Leadership and Values-reorientation for National Development in Rivers State

S/N	Items: Roles Variable	\bar{x}_1	SD ₁	\bar{x}_2	SD ₂	\bar{x} \bar{x}	Remarks
1.	Universities are built for knowledge acquisition as well as bringing about change in character and learning for individuals who attend schools.	3.14	1.14	3.10	1.10	3.12	Agreed

2.	Universities must disseminate knowledge of desired values by creating awareness through the enlightenment and interpretation of what the values stand for.	3.12	0.92	3.00	0.99	3.06	Agreed
3.	Universities serve society by providing intellectual leadership, and setting standards of morals and values, human resources development.	2.81	1.10	3.01	1.07	2.91	Agreed
4.	The universities serve as a depository of the national values and culture.	2.97	1.06	3.17	1.08	3.07	Agreed
5.	The university promotes the links between the national identify, culture, languages and history, and socio-economic development.	2.52	0.94	2.54	1.17	2.53	Agreed
6.	The universities require transformed administrators and teachers, applying transformational pedagogy to achieve societal values.	2.95	1.05	2.86	1.00	2.90	Agreed
7.	The universities require principle: centred / decisive leadership which will bring about the achievement of basic values that will shape all races/ peoples.	2.98	1.09	3.02	1.15	3.00	Agreed
8.	Universities provide a wide variety of programmes to suit the needs and aptitudes of the students.	3.10	0.85	3.00	0.99	3.05	Agreed
9.	Universities cultivate in the students human values, the spirit of national integration and social justice.	3.15	1.14	2.53	1.15	2.84	Agreed
10.	Universities involve themselves with the inculcation of the value system in keeping with the ideals of secularism, democracy as well as with studies, work and services related to national development.	3.04	0.94	3.57	1.06	3.30	Agreed
Criterion Mean $\bar{x} = 2.50$		2.97	1.02	2.98	1.07	2.97	

Legend:

\bar{x}_1	=	Mean responses of teaching staff of federal university
SD_1	=	Standard Deviation Mean I
\bar{x}_2	=	Mean responses of teaching staff of state universities
SD_2	=	Standard Deviation Mean II
\bar{x}	=	Aggregate/weighted mean

Scale

1.00 – 2.49	Disagree
2.50 – 4.00	Agree

Table 1 shows the analyses of results on assessment of the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values – reorientation for national development in core areas in school administration (See mean scores - 3.14 and 3.10; 3.12 and 3.00; 2.81 and 3.01; 2.97 and 3.17; 2.52 and 2.54; 2.95 and 2.86; 2.98 and 3.02; 3.10 and 3.00; 3.15 and 2.53; and 3.04 and 3.57 respectively (see mean scores of responses and the interpretation in table 1). In summary, with the aggregate weighted mean 2.97 and 2.98, teaching staff from federal and state universities agreed that the educational administrators are managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Ratings of Teaching Staff from Federal and State Universities on the Challenges of Educational Administrators in Managing Functional Public Universities for Leadership and Values-reorientation for National Development in Rivers State

S/N	Items: Challenges Variable	\bar{x}_1	SD ₁	\bar{x}_2	SD ₂	\bar{x}	\bar{x}	Remarks
11.	Proper counselling and values-orientation.	2.51	1.06	2.74	0.99	2.62		Agreed
12.	Reformation of curricular and pedagogy.	2.62	1.00	2.58	1.08	2.60		Agreed
13.	Globalization.	2.56	1.05	2.55	1.07	2.55		Agreed
14.	Corruption practices.	2.68	1.15	2.87	0.87	2.77		Agreed
15.	Indiscipline.	2.74	0.94	3.00	1.12	2.87		Agreed
16.	Exam malpractices.	3.01	1.04	2.93	1.08	2.97		Agreed
17.	Leadership education and training in values education.	2.56	1.07	2.60	1.09	2.58		Agreed
18.	Disregard for merit.	2.51	1.10	2.55	0.87	2.53		Agreed
19.	Non propagation of universally cherished values.	2.72	1.12	2.71	1.15	2.71		Agreed
20.	Non propagation of reforms and realities.	2.81	1.10	2.90	1.05	2.85		Agreed
Criterion Mean $\bar{x} = 2.50$		2.67	1.06	2.74	1.04	2.70		Agreed

The legend and scale for table 1 apply

Data on Table 2 shows that all the items (11-20), had weighted mean ratings above the criterion mean of 2.50, proper counselling and values-orientation (mean scores 2.51 and 2.74 for federal and state universities respectively); reformation of curricular and pedagogy (mean 2.62 and 2.58); globalization (mean 2.56 and 2.55); corruption practices (mean 2.68 and 2.87); indiscipline (mean 2.74 and 3.00); exam malpractice (mean 3.01 and 2.93); leadership education and training in values education (mean 2.56 and 2.60); disregard for merit (mean 2.51 and 2.55); non propagation of universally cherished values (mean 2.72 and 2.71) and non-propagation of reforms and realities (mean 2.81 and 2.90) respectively. These are prime justification of how these challenges affect both federal and state universities (see mean scores and interpretation in table 2). In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean 2.67 and 2.74, teaching staff from federal and state universities agreed that the educational administrators are faced with a lot of challenges in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between federal and state universities teaching staff on the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Table 3: Summary of z-test analysis on the ratings of teaching staff from federal and state universities on the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development

S/N	Categories	N	Mean	S.D	df	z-value	2-tailed Sig.	Remarks
1.	Teaching staff from federal university	600	3.24	1.06	908	1.262	.083	Not Sig. Fail to reject
2.	Teaching staff from state universities	400	3.33	1.08				

Table 3 shows that at 908 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, the calculated z-value yielded a z-value of 1.262 which was deemed to be significant at .083. Since this 2-tailed significant value is higher than .05 at which the hypothesis is tested, we consider that the difference is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected. We therefore uphold the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the teaching staff from federal and state universities on the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between federal and state universities teaching staff on the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

Table 4: Analysis on summary of z-test staff the ratings of teaching from federal and state universities on the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development

S/N	Categories	N	Mean	S.D	df	z-value	2-tailed Sig.	Remarks
1.	Teaching staff from federal university	600	3.08	1.05	908	1.547	.017	Sig. Reject Ho
2.	Teaching staff from state universities	400	3.21	1.15				

Table 4 indicates that at 908 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, the calculated z-value yielded a z-value of 1.547 which was significant at .017. Since this 2-tailed significant value is lower than .05, we conclude that the difference is significant. Apparently, the null hypothesis is accepted. We therefore withhold the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the teaching staff from federal and state universities on the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development.

DISCUSSION

The finding of this study indicated that teaching staff assessment of their educational administrators from federal and state universities under study were in agreement that the roles played by these administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-reorientation for national development were very necessary in school administration. This finding confirms the work of Kaegon (2008), Dienye and Iwele (2011), and Ebong (2000), among numerous others who in their scholarly expositions and research findings provided a wealth of background information on managing functional public universities to provide variety of programmes to suit the needs and aptitudes of the students. The result of this finding agrees with Obanya (2014) who maintain that quality education, values-orientation could be achieved by effective management of schools through committed educational administrators who walk the talk (visionary leaders). This is to ensure that the change/values-orientation effort is managed by capable hands. However, in spite of the result of the finding, what administrators need is proper orientation and actions to implement various programmes that will promote human values, the spirit of national integration and social justice.

It was also found out on table 2, the opinions of the teaching staff that educational administrators are faced with a lot of challenges on a daily basis to manage public universities. These challenges is understandable in the light of underfunding (economic

recession), increased enrolment and so on plaguing the education system. This finding lends credence to the views of Obasanjo (2000) that the educational administrators and lecturers have to pilot the affairs of the universities to successfully face the challenges of: access, values orientation, quality, relevance, financing and globalization among others. Adegoke (2017) in support of this finding lament that teenagers who are without proper counseling and re-orientation would believe in quick-money-making syndrome which is defective mentality. The scholar, however, advised that youths should focus on living a virtuous life and making good use of the internet and social media for their personal development and development in Nigeria.

This research finding is in line with the observations of Ugwuegbu (2011), FME-ORASS (2006), and Obanya (2014) that university education is expected in all cultures to inculcate values. For the scholars, values-orientation is aimed at resolving the crises of politics, disunity, religious bigotry, tribalism, corruption practices and discipline. No wonder, Dienye and Iwele (2011) insist that educational administrators and lecturers should be given leadership education and be retrained in values education to enable them have relative command and authority of the right values needed to handle the youths for national integration and development.

Table 3 revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state universities teaching staff on the roles of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-orientation for national development. This position agrees with Ebong (2000), Obanya (2014), and Kaegon (2008) who noted that what is required in universities is a principle-centred/decisive leadership which will bring about the achievement of basic values that will shape all races/peoples. Leadership action is always the result of an ability to think out of the box.

Lastly, it was found out there is significant difference between the mean ratings of federal and state universities teaching staff on the challenges of educational administrators in managing functional public universities for leadership and values-orientation for national development. This result of this finding agrees with Obasanjo (2000), Adegoke (2017) and FME-ORASS (2006) who reiterated that there is a deep-seated value crisis in the society, largely due to the absence of leadership by example at all levels of education. However, these challenges can be surmounted if the educational administrators and lecturers focus on productivity, promote basic virtues, reward hard work, performance that universities are established to achieve.

Implications

- Educational administrators in both federal and state universities playing positive roles will offer quality programmes on all aspects of multi-cultural education, equity, social justice, diversity, values/values-reorientation among others and provide better educational services to its clients and consumers/customers.
- Seasoned educational administrators and lecturers can surmount these challenges facing them through professional development programmes which help in the continuous update of their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

CONCLUSION

Universities and/or educational administrators can improve their performance by bringing the most up-to-date mentoring and grooming methods and knowledge to bear on its training, leadership, values-orientation among others and also, try to surmount the numerous challenges confronting them for national development.

Recommendations

- University leadership should be at the forefront to transmit codified knowledge (explicit-instructional and the implicit-behavioural) for sustainable values-orientation to take place.
- School administrators and lecturers should be trained and retrained from time to time through workshops and seminars on managing functional public universities for leadership, values-orientation to achieve national development.

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